



“Geology and Paleontology”

The Grand Parade Ground is lower than the surrounding areas because of the type of rock located below it. Dolostone is similar to limestone, something you may be more familiar with, in that it dissolves slowly in water. Over millions of years the rock beneath the Grand Parade has dissolved and eroded away, creating a valley. The valley is drained by underground channels created in the dissolving rock. You cannot see any streams in this valley because they are underground. The valley also contains numerous caves and sinkholes. A sinkhole forms when the roof of one of these caves or underground channels collapses.

Dolostone in the valley was heavily mined here during the 19th century. The line of trees you see on the horizon borders some of the old quarries. In 1870, quarry workers discovered the Port Kennedy Bone Cave, an ancient sinkhole containing many fossils of plants and animals dating to the Great Ice Age. Over 1,200 specimens were recovered, including bones from a mastodon, saber-toothed tiger, ground sloth, and ice age horse. Although the cave location was lost for many years, it has been re-located underground near the Welcome Center.